

Tunis. He proceeded to justify his selection by a series of reforms in the organization and munitioning of the army, the strengthening of fortifications, and the provision of creature comforts for the *poilu*. Since the mind of France was focussed on national defence, and since no comprehensive reforms had been made for a decade, he became a celebrity and the acclamations of the crowd aroused his political ambitions. D6roulfde, who as early as 1883 announced that at last he had found a man, ** I might even say our man," offered him the services of the 500,000 members of the Ligue des Patriotes. *La Trance* *Military Le Drapeau, La Frontttre, I*Anti-Prussim, La Revanche*, and many Chauvinist pamphlets sang his praises, announced that France was ready, and preached the holy war.

" Monsieur le Ministre de k Guerre," observed Freycinet one day in July 1886, " vous faites un peu trop mon metier.*" The gentle rebuke produced no effect, for the General relished his position on the crest of the wave. People began to whisper and to watch. " The topic of the day," reported Lord Lyons, the British Ambassador, on July 2, " is the conduct of Bou-langer. He has by degrees put creatures of his own into the great military commands, and he is said to have used strange language in the Council of Ministers. From the way people talk one would think the question was whether he is aiming at being a Cromwell or a Monk," A fortnight kter Lord New-ton, of the British Embassy, described his appearance at the *fitt* of July 14. " The mountebank had provided himself with a high-actioned bkck circus horse. As he pranced backwards and forwards and the public yelled their acclama-tions, President Gr6vy and the uninteresting crowd of bour-geois Ministers and Deputies seemed visibly to quiver and

flinch. From that day Bouknger became a dangerous man." The German Military Attaché sent home long reports on his activities and on the provocations of the press. "The last few days have witnessed several remarkable outbreaks of chauvinism," reported Count Miinster, the German Ambassador, on October 14. "The artificially stimulated hatred of Germany is if possible stronger than ever, but the war of revenge is far from being popular. The wish that there may be one day a holy war is common to every Frenchman, but the demand for its speedy fulfilment is met with a shake of the head." Bouknger himself, he added a few weeks later, was believed by some intimate friends to be afraid of war, since he knew too well the weak points of the army; but he kept his fears to himself.